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as when she took it in. She then walks to and fro, repeating the words of the charm, her mouth all the time filled with the water. When the charm is finished, she pours the water out of her mouth into the clean basin, and will point out the mote, or whatever it may have been, floating in the water, or lying in the bottom of the vessel. In fact, you could scarcely mention a malady with which the Midwife of the old school was not prepared to grapple by the aid of a charm. The tooth-ache, the cholera, measles, childbirth, all had their respective charms. The latter especially required one of a very pithy cast. Every one knows that the power of fairies in Ireland is never so strong, nor so earnestly put forth, as in the moment of parturition, when they strive by all possible means to secure the new-born infant before it is christened, and leave a shangeling in its stead. Invaluable indeed is the midwife who is possessed of a charm to prevent this, and knows how to arrange all the ceremonies that are to be observed upon the occasion without making any mistake, for that would vitiate all. Many a time on such occasions have the ribs of the roof been made to crack, the windows rattled out, the door pushed with violence, and the whole house shaken as if it would tumble about their heads—and all by the fairies—but to no purpose: the charm of the midwife was a rock of defence; the necessary precautions had been taken, and they were ultimately forced to depart in a strong blast of wind, screaming and howling with rage and disappointment as they went.

There were also charms for the diseases of cattle, to cure which there exist in Ireland some processes of very distant antiquity. We ourselves have seen elemental fire produced by the friction of two green boughs together, applied as a remedy for the black-leg and murrain. This is evidently of Pagan origin, and must have some remote affinity with the old doctrines of Baal, the ancient god of fire, whose worship was once so general in Ireland.

Of these charms it may be said that they are all of a religious character, some of them evidently the production of imposture, and others apparently of those who seriously believed in their efficacy. There is one thing peculiar about them, which is, that they must be taught to persons of the opposite sex: a man, for instance, cannot teach a charm to a man, nor a woman to a woman, but he may to a woman, as a woman may to a man. If taught or learned in violation of this principle, they possess no virtue.

In treating of the Irish Midwife, we cannot permit ourselves to overlook the superstition of the "lucky caul," which comes so clearly within her province. The caul is a thin membrane, about the consistence of very fine silk, which covers the head of a new-born infant like a cap. It is always the omen of great good fortune to the infant and parents; and in Ireland, when any one has unexpectedly fallen into the receipt of property, or any other temporal good, it is customary to say "such a person was born with a 'lucky caul' on his head."

Why these are considered lucky, it would be a very difficult matter to ascertain. Several instances of good fortune, happening to such as were born with them, might by their coincidences form a basis for the superstition; just as the fact of three men during one severe winter having been found drowned, each with two shirts on, generated an opinion which has now become fixed and general in that parish, that it is unlucky to wear two shirts at once. We are not certain whether the caul is in general the perquisite of the Midwife—sometimes we believe it is; at all events, her integrity occasionally yields to the desire of possessing it. In many cases she conceals its existence, in order that she may secretly dispose of it to good advantage, which she frequently does; for it is considered to be the herald of good fortune to those who can get it into their possession. Now, let not our English neighbours smile at us for those things until they wash their own hands clear of such practices. At this day a caul will bring a good price in the most civilized city in the world—to wit, the good city of London—the British metropolis. Nay, to such lengths has the mania for cauls been carried there, that they have been actually advertised for in the Times newspaper.

Of a winter evening, at the fireside, there can be few more amusing companions than a Midwife of the old school. She has the smack of old times and old usages about her, and tastes of that agreeable simplicity of manners which always betokens a harmless and inoffensive heart. Her language is at once easy, copious, and minute, and if a good deal pedantic, the pedantry is rather the traditional phraseology and antique humour which descends with her profession, than the peculiar property or bias of her individual mind. She affects

much mystery, and intimates that she could tell many strange stories of high life; but she is always too honourable to betray the confidence that has been reposed in her good faith and secrecy. In her dress she always consults warmth and comfort, and seldom or never looks to appearance. Flannel and cotton she heaps on herself in abundant folds, and the consequence is, that although subject to all the inclemency of the seasons both by night and day, she is hardly ever known to be sick. The cottage of the Midwife may in general be known by the mounting-stone which is beside her door, and which enables her without difficulty or loss of time to get on horseback behind the impatient messenger. The window of her bedroom is also remarkable for its opening on hinges like a door, a thing not usual in the country. This is to enable her to thrust forth her well-flannelled head without any possible delay, in order to inquire the name of the party requiring her aid, the length of journey before her, and such other particulars as she usually deems necessary. The sleep of the Midwife is almost peculiar in its character to herself. No person sleeps more soundly and deeply than she does, unless to a knock at the door or a tap at the window, to both of which it may be said she is ever instinctively awake. We question if a peal of cannon discharged at her house-side would disturb her; but give on the other hand the slightest possible knock or tap at either her door or window, and ere you could imagine she had time to awaken, the roll of flannel that contains her head is thrust out of the window.

Having thus recited everything, so far as we could remember it, connected with the social antiquities of her calling, and detailed some matters not generally known, that may, we trust, be interesting to those who are fond of looking at the springs which often move rustic society, we now close this "Essay on Midwifery," hoping to be able to bring the Midwife herself personally on the stage in our next, or at least in an early number.

GLIMPSES IN THE MOUNTAINS.

BY COUL GOPPAGH.

WHAT can have become of the old world I remember long long ago—almost twenty years ago? It is a weary look backward, and the distance hides it. This is not the world I was born in. I remember when the old men used to show me the ways they walked in, scores of years before, and the very corners and the footpaths through the fields. Here they met an old friend—there they took shelter from a storm. On this lake they skated all day—from that hill they saw the ships returning with victory from foreign war. Men walked quietly together then in silence or friendly talk, and did not jostle each other from the way; they went to bed and rose as the sun did; they followed in their fathers' ways—read the same books, laughed at the same fine old jokes, and believed their posterity would do the same. Old men then wore grey hairs, and saw their children's children, and were venerable. But they are all gone; and could they look out of their graves (if indeed their very graves be spared), they would not know the old world they used to live in.

It is all changed now with us old fellows of five-and-twenty. We are left doting among the ruins of our youth. There is nothing left to us of our early days. The old crooked grassy byeways where we went to gather blackberries and idle away a summer day, have been gone over by the surveyor's chain, and some straight cut, with prim, bare fences, has run it down. The little stream has been piped over, and, where it "babbled o' green fields," is a noisy, muddy thoroughfare. Over the green glen where the hazels nourished their brown clusters, strides a cursed viaduct; the execrable railway has frightened the linnet from the boughs, and a bird's nest shall never more be found. In the lonely bay where we used to gather shells, thinking ourselves in fairy land, and wondering what lay beyond the dim horizon, the steamboat roars and splashes. Riot and swearing and slang and vice of cities have usurped the quiet haunts of country calm and charity.

It is for a coming age all these things are preparing: to us is allotted only the vexation and bewilderment. I have no associations to link me to these horrors, and I prefer the old repose to all the luxuries they bring. What is it to me that I can go to East or West in so many days sooner, or even if the sun that sets on me to-night should rise for me to-morrow by the Ganges? Here is my "fortunate isle;" this is my home where my heart is. I have no business with Egypt or the Nile. I wish to sit undisturbed by my own fireside, to

walk under the old trees, to look on my own fields, to be warmed by my own sun. But they will dig a canal through my silent walks, and the infernal city will pour through these banks its restless impurity, and make them echo with the laughter of brutal debauchery.

It is something for a man to look on the same scenes he looked on in his childhood, among the same fields and trees and household ways his forefathers tilled and planted, and knew before him. There is a sanctity grows round them year by year, enriching the heart, that cannot be broken through nor profaned without a loss never to be repaired. The exile can still listen to the whispering of the woods and the sound of the streams, but he remembers the woods and waters of his native land with tears. In twenty years I have grown old and an exile where I was born. Huge piles have covered the green where I played. The roar of busy streets insults the memory of the green lanes where I strolled at evening.

There is no country now. The city has invaded the solitude, and vice and impudent folly march in its rear. The bumpkin imitates the swagger of the citizen—the ploughman talks politics—the haymaker shakes the swathe and discourses of political economy—the reaper questions the revenue.

The mountains yet remain! I can see them, still, from my door; I can see them from the city streets. I can climb up their rugged sides still, and bless God that no discoverer as yet has uprooted the hills.

My heart is with them, for they have not changed. With them I have still a sovereign sympathy, for I can look on them and renew the fancies of my infancy. There is not a torrent pouring down their sides, not a crag nor a bramble, that is not reverend in my eye.

The world is drunk, and raves. Come away from these reeling bacchanals, and let us fare among the hills! Long ago, before the time of history, some naked savage here has worshipped the sunrise; some Druid sacrificed his victims; some barbarian Spartacus, lurking among the wild deer and the wolves, has defied his nation; some young warrior, with tears on his hardy cheek, has pointed up thither, whispering to one beside him dearer than his name, his clan, or his life, and sped away on the wings of love to the peace and safety of the mountains.

These noble fronts have never varied. The clouds float here over the same ridges on which the eyes of our childhood rested, and of the men of old time. The clank of monstrous engines has never yet dismayed the primeval stillness.

The skeleton of creation is visible here, and we see the beginnings of the world. This solid granite sparkled in the sun when "the evening and the morning were the first day," and was as firm and solid to the centre when the world was "without form and void." This whinstone rock has been hardened in some earthquake furnace long since then, and these flints are new, though they held fire before Prometheus suffered. This soft soil is the relics of the life and death of a thousand green years, and the fresh bloom that feeds on its decay will nourish succeeding blossoms.

The Western nations look here for the dawn, and the people of the East for sunset. Young children look up here from cottage doors at evening, and see the portals of Paradise opened, gazing through vistas brighter than imagination, unfolding far into the heart of heaven, and hold their breath, waiting for the passage of the archangels. This is a glorified soil. On these peaks hang the morning and the evening stars. The sun and the moon come here to do them honour; and they clothe themselves with gold and azure, and purple, deeper than the Tyrian, to receive their celestial guests.

High up here in this blessed solitude there is life, and liberty of heart, and sacred peace. No fenced-in space confines me here. I breathe in a domain as wide as the horizon, as high as the planets and the sun. The clouds are my fellow-wanderers here, and enjoy with me the liberal bosom of the air. Their ethereal hills and dales invite my fancy to a real heaven, where I gather all I love around me. Their shadows cover me as they pass over, and I bid them "God speed" as they carry cool showers down to the thirsting land. No miserable moan of want or sickness, no sob of long-breaking hearts, no choked sigh of cheated hope, nor any human woe, alarms me here. I see no loathsome household, plague-stricken with poverty, and festering in filth, despised of men, and famishing into horrors and crime: no form of woman (black shame before God!) wading in fetid rags through mire and snow, with those awful human (!) children of hers, debased as the swine with whom they sleep (for charity!) and on whom the

rich man looks—poor unreckoning fool!—and never pauses to think and tremble.

Here the wild bee sings among the rich fragrance of the heather-bells and thyme, gathering pure honey, fresh from the breath of the immediate sunrise. The larks have their nests among the heath by thousands, and make the whole mountain musical. Many strange insects, born and dying in the hour, that live on dew-drops, buzz by, and a thousand unknown creatures, gifted with voice, inhabiting small twigs in labyrinths of greenest moss, join in the hymn. The invisible wind, like a ruler of the strings, pours in a sovereign master-note that blends in all one solemn harmony, filling the air till the valleys sing for joy.

Here is Solitude, unforced, and free as the wandering wind. Here is peace like the summer life of untrodden blossoms. Here is a lofty quiet as of the dreams of the heart over its holy memories. Here are everlasting rocks, steadfast as honour, and true. Here is wealth for Fancy, and a dwelling for Imagination. Wide and far as the peaks can seek the heavens, there is no place for Envy or Hate, where the glens are vocal, and the holy silence compels the heart to adoration, making a haven for religion among the mighty hills.

What throes of central agony heaved up these huge mountains, twisting and folding each into each away as far as the eye can follow! What pangs and convulsions at the heart! What startling from chaotic trance, long before man or his mammoth ancestors, at the creative song of some wandering star-messenger, millions of years upon its way!

My heart enlarges here, and recognises an aerial amity with the sky. I am filled with celestial promptings. I shake off all incumbrance of the earth. I stretch out my arms to the blue heaven, and its breath comes into my bosom as a friend. The stir of humanity is dumb beneath me. I leap among the heathy knolls. I sing beside the infant rivers. I shout, and hear answers from the lurking echoes, like the mysterious voices of infinite years. I drink in unused air with

"Fair creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play 't the plighted clouds."

I stand wrapt in mute visions, growing into the majesty of the mountains. I spurn Decay and Time. I share the enduring strength, and carry lightly the burden of centuries.

The mountains swell up around me like a sea with billows. My footfall is inaudible, and I fleet to and fro like the unbodied soul of a great poet that makes the worlds it sees. There are no furrows on this soil: the curse has not fallen here. The sweat of the brow has not dropped here, nor aught save the rain and the dew of heaven. I am still nearer to the angels, and my spirit begins to put forth unaccustomed wings.

The ancient gods still linger here, and Antiquity has not yet grown old. The world has not yet heard "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," nor has Paul yet preached. Here I am a devout Pagan. I am the friend of Plato; I remember the voice of Socrates. I worship the Gods reverently, and have come up hither with sacrifice according to the voice of the oracle.

I have drunk with the muses at this fountain. Here, under the hanging ivy from the rock, I behold the real Castaly; and wherever the stream may wander, it will carry music on its way from divinest voices. From this clump I have listened to Apollo teaching the shepherds. Yea, I feel my veins tingling with a more celestial liquor; I own invulnerable limbs, and am myself a God!

It was not Mercury, but I, who passed swiftly down yon green declivity with feathered feet, and away over the hill-tops like the shadow of a cloud. Those cattle brousing in the thicket, far down the ravine, I stole from Pieria. I bear the imperial mandates, and the breeze carries the sound of my eloquence through all the forests.

But I aspire to loftier seats. This is the high Olympus; Saturn is baffled, and immortal Jove laughs at the terrible prophecies of the enduring Titan. Let him rend his rivets. Let him melt the heart of Caucasus, or appease the Vulture! Would that I could as easily escape the reproaches of Juno, or overcome Danie! But it shall rain gold to-morrow in her lap, and Leda shall fondle in her snowier bosom a snowy swan. Meanwhile let the nectar be poured! The laughing gods surround me, and I know immortal vigour. How Mercury jeered at the grinning Vulcan erewhile as he writhed his iron sinews, when I held him over the edge of heaven! Here I compel the clouds around me; I sit throned, and thunder.

Lo! to my ears comes up a solemn strain, and the Eagle shrieks and flies. The thunderbolt withers from my hand:—

"The Oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Rum through the arch'd roof with words deceiving;
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving;
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest in his prophetic cell."

A louder thunder has been heard than Jove's. There is a mountain more venerable than Olympus. Moses went up there to talk with God, and came down with the brightness of the sun in his countenance that could not be looked upon, bearing in his hand an eternal law. That thunder still echoes which shook Babylon, and quelled the Assyrian. The Persian rolled away before it like a cloud. The Egyptian, Greek, and Roman, have fled from it for ever.

But a greater than Moses has made the mountains holy. A greater hierophant opened up there the law and the prophets. On a mountain Satan confessed his conqueror. Who shall conceive of that tremendous hour, pregnant with the fate of man, when "Jesus went up alone into the mountain to pray!" And we know what deed was done on Calvary.

APOLOGUES AND FABLES FROM FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

(Translated for the Irish Penny Journal.)

No. V.—THE OLD MAN AND THE YOUTHS.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF LAFONTAINE.)

A man of eighty years was planting trees:—

"Ha! ha!" laughed out three striplings from the village,

"Planting at eighty!—Had his task been tillage,

Or building houses, or aught else you please,

The folly might have passed as less worth noting,

But—planting trees! He must indeed be doting!

Why, in the name of all that's odd, old neighbour,

What fruit can such as you expect to gather

From this ridiculous and driftless labour?

You, who already are a great-grandfather!

What! do you think to rival in his years

Methuselah? For shame! Do penance rather

For your past errors! Mourn your sins with tears!

Abandon hopes and plans that so ill suit your

Age and grey hairs! Give over looking wildly

Out through the vista of a boundless future!

All these are but for us, and such as we."

"They are not even for you," replied the Old Man mildly.

"Youth may be just as nigh Eternity

As Age. What though the pitfalls of Existence

Be covered o'er with flowers in lieu of snows,

Who shall foremeasure the brief distance

Between this dim dream's birth and close?

The winged bolts of Death are swift to strike

Life in its dawning as decline;

The pallid Parcae play their game alike

With your days and with mine.

Who knows which of us four shall be the one

To gaze last on the glory of the sun?

Molest me not, then. Leave me to employ

The hours that yet remain to me. I love

To think my great-grandchildren will enjoy

The shade and shelter of this embryo grove.

Meantime I live, I breathe, and I may even

Share for some years to come the gifts of Heaven.

Alas! even I may see the morning-light

Shine more than once, young men! upon your graves!"

The Old Man spake a truth which Time revealed:—

Boating soon after, on a stormy night,

One of these youths was buried in the waves—

A second was cut off upon the battle-field—

The third fell ill, and in four fleeting weeks

His bier was dressed with Death's pale plumes;—

So died the Three—thus early fated!

And while the tears rolled down his cheeks,

The Old Man sculptured on their tombs

The story I have here narrated.

M.

Learning, it has been said, may be an instrument of fraud: so may bread, if discharged from the mouth of a cannon, be an instrument of death.—*Bentham.*

THE SNUFF SHOP.

Few, we dare say, ever entered a shop of the description named in the title of this paper with any other idea than that they were entering merely a repository of Lundy Foot, cigars, and small twist. Few, we suppose, ever looked on such a place in any other light, or ever considered its keeper in any other point of view than that simply of a tobacconist. Yet is there another light, and a dismal one it is, in which both the snuff shop and the snuff dealer himself may be looked upon; and it is in such a light that we ourselves always do look upon them. This is, viewing the one as a charnel-house of defunct authors; the other as a goul, battering on their mortal remains. We sometimes vary this horrifying, but, alas! too correct view of the snuff shop and the snuff dealer, by supposing the one a sort of literary shambles or slaughter-house, and the other a cold-blooded, merciless literary butcher.

Taking either of these views of the snuff shop, what a change takes place in its aspect, and in that of every thing and person pertaining to it! What a dismal and hideous den it then becomes, and what a truculent, savage-looking fiend becomes that smiling and simpering tobacconist! No bowels of compassion has he for the mangled and mutilated authors that are lying thick around him, cruelly Burked by his own merciless hands. No; there he sits in the midst of the dire carnage as calm and unconcerned as if he had nothing whatever to do with it—the callous monster!

Pursuing the idea just broached, let us enter this horrid den, and for a moment contemplate its interior in a spirit in accordance with that idea; for, not being authors, we have nothing to fear for ourselves, it being that class only that need stand in awe of the snuff shop—to all others it is a harmless place enough.

Lo! then, behold (giving us the advantage here of a little stretch of imagination), the walls bespattered with the blood and brains of murdered authors; and see that blood-stained bench which the demon of the place calls a counter; and in various other depositories around lie their dismembered limbs and mangled carcases. Oh, it is a shocking and heart-rending sight!

Some of these unfortunates have evidently died hard: they have the appearance of having struggled desperately for life. But, alas, in vain! An irresistible destiny thrust them into the fatal snuff shop, where they perished quickly and miserably by the hand of the ruthless savage within. Others, again, seem to have quietly resigned themselves to their fate, and, indeed, to have been more than half dead before they were brought in; while others, again, appear to have been wholly defunct, having died a natural death. These, then, have been conveyed thither merely to be cut up, and converted to the degrading uses of the tobacconist.

Although some of the unhappy authors whose mangled remains strew this den of horrors seem to have attained a kind of maturity before they were cruelly torn to pieces as we now see them, by far the greater number are a sort of murdered innocents, having been strangled in their birth, or shortly after. A good many there are, too, who seem to have been dead born, or to have perished while yet in embryo.

Piteous as it is to look on the heavy, sturdy corpses of the murdered prose writers that lie thickly up and down this chamber of death, yet infinitely more piteous is it to contemplate the delicate, fragile forms of the poets thus cruelly mangled and mutilated that lie no less thickly around us. Poor dear, unfledged things! What a fate has been thine!—what a destiny, to be consigned, ere ye had yet opportunity to open your little musical throats, to the tender mercies of that literary Burke—that ruthless monster whom the world, thinking of him only in connection with cigars and pigtail, calls a tobacconist. Where now, sweet little humming birds, be those soft and tender notes with which ye sought, alas, how vainly! to charm the huge, rude ear of an uncouth and barbarous world that would not listen to ye? Alas, they have ceased for ever! How little does that savage, the demon of the place, mind your sweet, small voices, that give forth a piteous wail, like the last notes of the dying swan, every time he lays his merciless hands on you. Little, indeed! Let but a customer come in for half an ounce of "Blackguard," and he will, without the smallest hesitation or compunction, seize one of you, dear unfortunates, and tear you limb from limb for his own and that customer's convenience: ay, for a paltry three halfpence, mayhap less—a pennyworth of "Scotch"—will he perpetrate this atrocious deed. That sanguinary bench, that hor-